

Sunday Reading.

ANGELS OF THE BIRTHDAY.

Papa and Mamma Gray held a counsel. In the family history there was an anniversary day approaching. It was the birthday of their oldest daughter. She was fifteen years old. The result of the counsel was that this blessed day should be celebrated. A family party was planned.

There were twenty little cousins, six aunts, six uncles, three grandparents, for one dear grandpa had died.

The invitations were a source of great delight, for there on one side was the full name of each child, with the date of its birth, and on the other side was a bright little poem signed 'The Brownies,' and then came a picture of Bessie's chery face and the cordial invitation.

Aunt Clara planned a programme for the evening, and taught the cousins several pretty choruses. A list of charades was arranged, and papa was asked to welcome the grown folks, and Bessie the children. Aunt Emma, who lived miles away, was to be sent for and asked to talk to the children, and papa at the last minute said he had engaged the 'phonograph man' to come and bring not only his filled cylinders but some blank ones also. Was there ever such a beautiful party?

Then mamma with her skillful fingers decorated the rooms and arranged the tables while savory odors from the kitchen testified of the good things in store.

Very early the guests began to arrive, and Bessie, in her birthday dress of blue, flitted about like a bird, welcoming friends, expressing her thanks for some beautiful gift received, and exclaiming with delight at some new surprise.

The hour before supper was spent most happily as had been planned, and the announcement was made that after supper the phonograph should be heard. No one had missed Aunt Emma, but she and the 'phonograph man' had had a secret counsel.

After the supper the little party gathered in the large parlors watched the man as he adjusted the great horn of the phonograph, and listened eagerly, and this is what the phonograph said:

The Angels of the Birthday.

Out on the sea of the great unknown fifteen years ago to-night there floated the barques of many little souls. Let us watch them in their restless passing. There goes one swiftly. Gayly bedecked is the little craft, and it sails on and on till we see it lost in a beautiful oriental home; but alas! the soul of that baby girl is not welcome. Only the mother who holds the baby close to her heart, and would conceal its very life, loves the little one. No father hovers over her with fond pride, for baby girls are not welcome in oriental countries.

Another little barge sails past us and rests in the loving arms of an African mother. But the soul is white, and when these little soul-crafts started out, they were all alike to the One who had made them go. One was as dear to Him as the other.

But there comes another sail! How anxiously we watch its passage! Oh, if it should be lost on the way, or find its way to some other country! No, it comes straight on; it rests, and lo, in the arms of the waiting mother, lies our Bessie. There is no lack of welcome here. Only such love as springs from the divine heart can compare with the love for this new baby. Grandfathers, grandmothers, uncles and aunts come bringing their offerings of love. And the baby looks wise, closes its eyes wearily, and dreams, perhaps regretfully, of the beautiful land from which she came.

And Bessie grew—a wondering, questioning child. A new sister comes into the home; now she learns to love. Flowers and birds are her playmates; angels whisper to her beautiful thoughts; the sunshine kisses her cheeks; the soft winds toss back her hair; 'Life is a long play day,' she says. 'I shall play away.' She knows no better, our baby; she is but five to-day. The years hurry by and our little girl is ten. Her heart is full of hope now for the days to come,—but, oh, the days are so long! She would have them hurry! She would be a poet, a musician, an artist, a lady. The days are filled with dreams of the future. But she has not come to dream. Little brothers and sisters have come. Lessons of unselfishness are now to be learned, of helpfulness, of self-control. School with its duties is pressing and lessons are hard. Life is not all a play day. Ah, me!

Fifteen beautiful years are lived. Bessie is standing now on the threshold of young womanhood, and grandparents, uncles and aunts come again, bringing

congratulations and love. At ten one's ideas are vague, but at fifteen new ideas come, new desires. Some of us perhaps would say, 'Oh, Bessie, be a little girl again! Life is not all sunshine; there are clouds and tears.' But Bessie, peering out into the future tonight, sees only an alluring prospect, and God grant it may be so. There is one thing needful to make life all that it should be—that is, to sit as a learner, as did Mary, at the feet of our Lord.

There are beautiful angels that come to girls on their fifteenth birthdays, and whisper to them sweet secrets. Can we not hear them tonight as they bend over our Bessie? One says: 'Be beautiful, Bessie, be beautiful, and everyone will love thee.' 'O that I might sweet angel! Tell me how. Every girl longs to be beautiful,' and the angel says, 'Beauty is not in the face alone, it is heart-deep; out of the heart it comes. The secret I give thee is to let thy heart rest in the heart of Infinite Peace. Cultivate repose of manner and quietness of mind. It is worry and fretfulness and peevishness that mar the face. Be amiable, create about yourself an atmosphere of sunshine, and you will be beautiful.' 'What is your name, O angel?' cries Bessie. 'I would write it in the book of my life, and with it the secret you have given me.' 'They call me, my child, the Angel of Beauty.'

A radiant face appears, and a silvery voice says, 'I am the Angel of Happiness, and all the world seeks me. I come not to the rich nor the beautiful nor to the learned, and I am not found of those that seek me. I enter the home, whether it be rich or poor, where each one patiently does his duty. Where love dwells, I come; where each one seeks not his own, but another's good; where sympathy is the spirit. I bring with me precious jewels. I transform the cottage to a palace. I turn the plainest garments into royal apparel. I bid my harps play their sweetest music. Eluding the one who seeks me for herself, I come to the one who, forgetting herself, seeks me for another. I would come to you Bessie. Will you give me room in your heart?'

What a gentle angel comes now! How tranquil, how calm is her face! She is not needed in great emergencies, but her ministry is especially to those who are tried in the afflictions of everyday life. She is the Angel of Small-sacrifices. She hovers near and whispers, 'Keep sweet,' when our plans must be given up, our desires thwarted. She bids us keep back the harsh word and conquer the self within us. She would have us yield gracefully. This gentle angel finds the greatest opportunity to help the eldest sister of the family. It is often by trifles that the harmony of home life is broken. Let our Bessie seek the help of this good angel, and strive to put into her life this grace of the Angel of Little-sacrifices that will make her winsome.

A tender voice is now speaking to Bessie and the love-light in the eyes of this angel makes the face beautiful. 'I would be to you, Bessie,' she says, 'all you seek in a counselor and guide; I would be with you in your joys, I would have you tell me your sorrows; I would spare your heart-aches and pain; I would protect you from the falseness and flatteries of life, I would seek your confidence; would always open my heart to you, whatever might be your coming. The heart of the one now whispering to you can never be separated from you; for it has ever beaten in harmony with your own. Will you make me your best friend? Your heart can safely trust in me.' And Bessie turns, but she does not see the face of the angel. 'Who is it? On, tell me!' she cries. 'I would see her face! I would be ever with her! I would have such a friend!' The angel's answer, 'We call her the Angel of the Household.' And as they bring her forward, Bessie beholds the face of—her mother.

And as the Angels of the Birthday glide away, they softly chant. 'He shall give his angels charge over thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.'

But look! A face of matchless beauty appears, a halo of glory surrounding it. The Angels stay their flight and bow their

heads. Bessie beholds as in a vision the face of the Savior of the world, and a voice that has been heard for ages in the hearts of men speaks in infinite tenderness. Bessie listens. 'My child, give me thine heart. I would have thy beautiful young womanhood. I would have thy service in the church. I would have thy influence in society. I would have thee lean thy heart upon me. Should sorrow come, should temptation, should sin, I will give thee comfort, will give thee power to withstand, will give thee forgiveness, will place about thee, even as thy mother did in thy infancy, the everlasting arms. I will give my angels charge over thee. Come, O come to me.'

Bessie's heart responds. She falls on her knees, and with upturned face and outstretched hands she cries, 'I come! I come! There was silence in the little company when the story was ended. A solemn awe rested on the faces of the children.

Bessie's face indicated that she had not listened in vain to the voices that had been talking to her in the Story of her Birthday.

THE PIECED SLEEVE.

A Boys Love for His Mother's Work Wins Him Many Friends.

Children and growing young people are sometimes impatient of the work of dear home-fingers. While patient hands are cutting and fitting, there is a little sigh for tailor-made garments, or perhaps the wish is expressed that 'we can't afford to go to a fashionable dress-maker.' To all such we commend this little story.

Albert P. was the young clerk in the M—Bank, Boston. He was not quite twenty-one years old, slender, delicate, bright-faced. Every one like him, from the young clerks among whom he first served, to the kind, keen friend to whom he owed his promotion.

'Al never makes a fuss about anything!' said one of the young men, looking up pleasantly, to where Albert sat perched on a high stool, busy over his long columns of figures. 'Harry got your coat on by mistake this noon, Al, and he's afraid a fellow stole it.'

'What!' said Albert, looking up in a startled way, quite forgetting to 'carry one' to the next column.

'Have mine, you know, if I don't find it, said Harry quickly. 'It was so stupid of me! But mine's a good coat—just bought it—and fits you like your skin. Didn't know we were so near of a size before, did you?'

'That's all right, Harry. Your coat's worth twice what mine is—yours was new and mine wasn't. But say, if you don't mind—won't you please do what you can to get it back somehow? Get an ad. into the evening addition—here, I'll write one!'

'What's all this?' asked the president coming up pleasantly, and picking up the advertisement which Harry was staring at. 'Lost—Light-weight overcoat—m—m—m—what's this? "Eleven pieces in the sleeve!" That's a curious description!'

'Yes, sir!' said Albert modestly. 'You see it's worth a great deal to me. My mother made it.'

The president gave him a keen look. 'I see!' he said, and passed on into his inner office.

Before night the overcoat was safe in its owner's delighted hands again. The advertisement did not go into the papers, but the president told Albert afterward that a special detective had spent half a day tracing it, and he added that so valuable a coat was well worth all the expense and trouble.

'Your dear mother is not living, I infer?' he queried kindly at the close of the interview.

'Oh, yes,' said Albert thankfully, while the tears sprang to his eyes at the thought of losing her. 'But I am very careful of everything she ever made me, for she has had a long illness, and we do not know whether she will ever be able to sew for us any more. She can do such wonderful needlework—you can hardly see the joinings in that sleeve, sir! If she should die—and here the boy's voice broke—my father says I shall be very proud of this pieced sleeve.'

'And well you may be!' responded the president warmly, bowing out his young



visitor with a most benevolent expression of countenance.

Albert did not live to become bank president or anything of that sort. He was promoted within the year to the post of teller, with a much increased salary, and was able to carry home enough of his earnings to have saved his mother's loving fingers from a little of their old piecing and contriving. But he died before she did, and when, at the age of twenty-two and a few months, he lay asleep among the flowers, I noticed one large rose-wreath with this card on it:

From—, President of—Bank.
'In memory of a young man who appreciated his mother.'

FRED'S CHANCE.

The Future is Shaped by the Smallest of Daily Actions.

If young people knew how much depends upon the way in which they attend to their every-day tasks, how their whole future is shaped by to-day's carelessness or faithfulness, they would set out to deserve a successful future with hopefulness and courage. Not only Christ's praise, but all other good things, come to those who are faithful.

Fred is a member of the Latin school. He studies hard and is always prompt in his attendance. Though he was not well prepared when he entered, he made up his lack of drill by extra work and now stands near the head of his class. He has been hoping to go from the school to college and to enter a profession which requires this thorough education. A short time ago, however, his father was taken sick, and it is now probable that Fred will have no help from home in further study. For a few days he has been facing the hard necessity of leaving school and giving up the hope of college.

A relation of Fred's says that he was reading an account of the Latin school graduation day in the paper and saw [that] the boy had won two prizes, one for the excellence in the classics and another for faithfulness and attention to study, and he wondered that it should be the fate of such a boy to lose his chance, while so many fellows, who cared little about study, would have abundance of means to go on. He forgot about the compensation that comes to every one who does good work—the feeling that he has been equal to what was asked of him. But even while he was mourning Fred's disappointment, a letter came to him stating that Fred had received an offer from his teacher that would take away all the need of leaving school. A wealthy man wished to help some deserving boy to an education; he had left the selection to the teacher, giving the boy the chance to go through the Latin School and college with all his bills paid, and the privilege of paying the money back afterwards, if he was able, and chose to do so. The friend of learning requested the teacher to give the chance to some boy who had 'earned it by his faithfulness.' Fred is very happy now that he has been studying so hard the last two or three years; but he does not forget Christ's promise to help those who serve him, and he gives his most fervent thanks. Nobody who reads this account would call this faithful scholar's opportunity a piece of good luck. God has been watching Fred—the teachers have been watching him; the rich donor of the money has been noticing all his life that the faithful boys are the faithful men.

NOTHING WITHOUT WORK.

All Success and Fame in Life Comes Through Hard Work.

The boy who thinks that he can get along because he is bright and ready and does not need to work will always be disappointed. All success comes from hard work, and most failures are due to the want of it. A bright boy lately learned this to his cost.

He had led his class previously and now went to a new school expecting the same success. At first he made a good impression; he faithfully prepared his lessons and was on the way to a leading place in the school. But soon idle boys wanted his company in study hours and persuaded him that he could recite well without so much work.

'You are too good a scholar to dig!' they said, and he listened to their fatal flattery.

By and by he began to fail in his classes; then he received a warning from his teacher; later, his father heard that his boy

was 'going to the bad,' and hastened to the school. So far the foolish fellow had done nothing very disgraceful, but he had fallen behind so far that he had become discouraged and thought that it was of no use to try to win his old place. A little sober talk and a great deal of patience and kindness on his father's part set the boy again to hard work. But, while he is now in a fair way to regain his lost rank, he has learned a lesson which he will never forget. Only work wins.

Truth, Best and Safest.

For ages the fossil remains of sea plants and animals have from time to time been found in rocks and on mountains. Somewhere about the seventh century an Arabian philosopher advanced the theory that this was because the mountains in which these things were found had been created by water. A similar explanation was put forth by the engineer-artist, Leonardo da Vinci, in the fifteenth century, and by Palissy the Potter in the sixteenth; but thence onward for more than a hundred years the earth was a sealed book to man. Ignorance, prejudice, and vested interests (chiefly ecclesiastical) stood in the way of that sort of investigation. The effort to acquire exact knowledge was extra hazardous in those days, and it was still more risky to publish it. A Dominican Monk, Giordano Bruno, said he believed the earth turned on its axis; and they roasted him alive for it on February 15th, 1600.

But, then, none of us is afraid of that now. The only excuse for ignorance—at least of matters which have been unearthed and cleared up—is want of time to study the subject and to read what is written. And for men in certain responsible positions even this apology will not avail. Chemists must know their acids and gases; miners must know their minerals; navigators must know their way across the trackless ocean, and the surgeon must know how the body is made and the relative functions of all its organs.

Had a particular doctor known what it was his duty to know he never would have told a woman patient of his that all her trouble was due to weak action of the heart. For, as the sequel showed, it was not so; and the mistake came near proving fatal to her. 'In October, 1890,' she tells us, 'I became low, weak and prostrated. I had no desire for food, and the little I ate gave me intense pain at my chest and around the waist. There was also a horrible gnawing sensation in the stomach which nothing relieved, and I was much troubled with palpitation and pain around the heart. A little later my breathing came to be so bad I had to be bolstered up whilst in bed.'

'I then began to lose strength rapidly and grew so feeble I could no longer move about; and was obliged to take to my bed. There I lay for four long months—being nursed night and day. From a strong, healthy woman I was in six months reduced to a mere shadow of my former self. I had a doctor attending me. Several times he examined my heart and said all my trouble was due to a weak action of the heart. I took bottle after bottle of medicine without benefit. I was now as near death's door as any one could be and live and had given up hope. Yet I am now in good health, and thus it came to pass:—

'In April, 1891, my sister, living at Bath wrote and urged me to try a medicine called Mother Seigel's Syrup. I had no great expectations of its doing me good, but my husband procured a bottle from Mr. R. Widdowson, the chemist at Bulwell. After taking it for a week, I felt much better. My appetite revived, and my food caused me no pain. My breathing also was easier. For these good reasons I continued to use this medicine, and in ten days I was able to leave my bed. I was still very weak, but getting stronger every day. Not long afterwards I was able to walk about, and in three months I was as well as ever. I consider that Mother Seigel's Syrup saved my life, and desire other sufferers to hear of it. I am therefore willing my statement should be published if you think it may do good. I will answer any inquiries. (Signed) Matilda Walter, 22, Chatham Street, Highbury Vale, Bulwell, Nottingham, October 30th, 1894.'

The error in this case consisted in the false assumption that Mrs. Walter's disease was of the heart, when in fact it was of the digestion and of the digestion only. The weakness of the heart was due solely to the general weakness of the whole body,—and that resulted from the patient's inability to digest sufficient food to sustain her strength. In that fact lies the very nature of dyspepsia—the most prolific of evil of all our ailments. Under its influence of the organs of the system are more or less crippled,—as a watch ticks faintly and loses time when the spring is almost uncoiled. When Mother Seigel's Syrup corrected the digestion, food began to do its good work, strength returned and the heart acted as it should. How simple, how natural! Let us try, my friends, to know the truth—for ignorance travels ever in darkness.

Reverse Action.

'Hello, old fellow, I'm glad to hear that your wife is well. Didn't the doctors tell her she couldn't recover?' 'Yes, and if they'd told her that she must get well she would have fooled them just as badly. I saved her by telling them her disposition.'

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